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# The subjective approach as a tool for understanding poverty: The case of Senegal.

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## Abstract

This article offers an analysis of poverty using a set of dimensions not yet explored particularly oriented on "the poverty felt". Poverty is measured here, not in relation to a standard or predefined threshold of income or expenditure, or based on criterions of welfare quantifiable, but through the perception that households have, themselves, of their socioeconomic situation (the household self-assesses poor or not). On this basis, we propose an econometric analysis to determine the factors which condition the subjective evaluation of the households of their standard of living, in Senegal in 2006. Besides the traditional factors (age, sex, environment (urban or rural) of residence and educational level of the head of the household), factors as the district of residence of household's head, the policies implemented by the State received by the household and the extent of corruption in the community, appear largely explained the poverty felt in Senegal.

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**Keywords:** Poverty, Inequality, Poverty Experienced, Poverty in perception in Senegal.

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## 1. Introduction

We accept, for some time that the well-being and poverty cannot be reduced to evaluation of objectives variables (income, expenditure or basic functioning). Now, it is become more necessary to recognize that households' perceptions about their daily lives is also an element of apprehension of their hardships. The profiles of monetary poverty, as multidimensional are excellent tools to target the most destitute groups of the population. However, these tools remain silent on the perception of the poor about their own socioeconomic status, their concerns in terms of actions to consider in the fight against poverty and their perception of the

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relative effectiveness of the various policies implemented to improve their living conditions. The data stemming from the ESPS - 2006 offer a pallet of information allowing approaching a qualitative and participative methodology which leads to an elaboration of a profile of subjective poverty. This poverty aims at measuring how the well-being is felt by populations themselves. Because those considered as poor are not necessarily the ones who consider themselves poor, and that of new profiles and factors of the poverty are got as soon as the populations decide themselves on their situation at towards the poverty (Doudich, on 2009). To this end, this paper proposes an econometric analysis of poverty. The second section is a review of the literature on the subjective poverty in particular in Senegal and presents the methodological tools necessary for the apprehension of the subjective poverty by highlighting the specification of the model of analysis. The section 3 is an econometric analysis to determine the factors which condition the subjective evaluation of the households of their standard of living, in Senegal in 2006. And the section 4 describes the levers on which, according to the households the State has to prioritize.

## **2. Literature Review and Methodological Options**

The objective approach of poverty results from questions relative to the minimal income and on the scale of equivalence in particular, the spending below which the household lives in the poverty compared with what reigns in the social environment. Subjective measures aim to relax these constraints by allowing everyone to appreciate his own level of well-being or the difficulties he encounters in his life (and Razafindrakoto Roubaud, 2005). In other words, the notion of subjective poverty admits that poverty lines derive from essentially subjective judgments of what constitutes an acceptable level by the population of a given society. If the approach by felt poverty has obtained some theoretical legitimacy, the fact remains that it nonetheless its support in practice raises questions. These subjective measures allow certainly taking into account the opinion of the population in the evaluation of poverty (Kahneman and al 1999). However, they are hardly reliable and sometimes even biased because of cultural, territorial and socio-economic considerations. Indeed, the fact of leaving the care of household to qualify himself as poor or non-poor is a good way to avoid the normative dimension of objective indicators. Forming the perception of well-being not based on the amount of accumulated experience, but according to the psychological state. However, it tends to influence more the affective part than cognitive of the individual perception (Siegrist, on 2003). Although this form of arbitrariness prevails also in the evaluation of monetary poverty, including particular data from household survey (Dubois, 1998). Huppert and Whittington (2003) show, for their part, that dissatisfaction in a particular domain can influence negatively the subjective perception of the other domains and the general state of the individual, while Paugam (2001) fears, as for him, of the risk of overestimation of the satisfaction bound to the culture of the poverty, developed in certain individuals, especially the more helpless. One of difficulties with this approach is the divergence of the definition of "poor" by respondents that the threshold is socially significant. A second difficulty is bound to the equivalence of the words in the various contexts and the various languages, so that international comparisons are meaningful. As underline it Ravallion and Lokshin (1998), it is paradoxical that the economists who base their analyses on the utility of individuals, estimate that they are better judges of the well-being of these ones , from objective indicators (partial and subject to problems of measures) than the individuals themselves. Another difficulty lies in the fixation of a threshold. Certainly, one can construct a subjective poverty line by comparing spending effectively realized at the value which every household or individual declares be the minimum necessity to live a decent life. But in this case, the poverty line would vary according to the preferences of the individuals. So, even if this approach lets the freedom to the individuals to determine themselves what is good or necessary, it contains difficulties as for its interpretation. Indeed, is it legitimate to classify two households of which income varies, only because they are dissatisfied of their way of living? In a way, the subjective approaches endorses without correcting them,

the phenomena of attribution or self-feeding of the aspirations often observed to the most deprived. To take into account the way whose people see their living is the only approach directly compatible with the subjectivity of concept of utility (Razafindrakoto and Roubaud, 2001). Few studies have approached the subjective poverty. The scarcity of studies on individuals' perceptions of their level of well-being is explained by the non-permanence of household surveys addressing the multiple facets of poverty and its subjective dimension. It can be attributable also in the hypothesis according to which the poverty is above all and essentially monetary among the poorest and in the poorest countries (Argyle, on 1999, Ferrer-i-Carbonnell, on 2002). The rare studies using the qualitative perceptions of the households in developing countries to understand poverty (Pradhan, Ravallion, 1998, Jamaica and Nepal, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of Senegal, 2001, Ravallion Lokshin, 1998 and DAESS, 2001) conclude at the robustness of the approach. The line of subjective poverty which is deducted from the perception of the households of the level of their needs is also substantial as a line of "objective" poverty pulled on their level of consumption (Razafindrakoto and Roubaud, on 2001). Some studies have attempted to take into account empirically the subjective well-being of individuals. The most known are the ones of the school of Leyden (Van Praag and alii, 1994) from Minimum Income Question ( MIQ) and by which the individuals estimate the adequate minimum income which satisfies the current essentials functioning in the society. The contribution of Easterlin (2001), and Roubaud, Razafindrakoto and Herrera (2006) prove the existence of a positive relation between the subjective well-being and the income, both in the developed countries and those in development. Although, this correlation would be relative according to the works of Frey and Stutzer, (2002). Besides, Narayan and al (2000) and the World Bank ( 2001 ), within the framework of the initiative aiming to listen to " the voice of the poor " in developing countries, offer a perspective for individuals and/or households to appreciate subjectively their living conditions. Data from the ESPS - 2006 enable and facilitate the apprehension of subjective poverty insofar as households rank themselves in a category according to their cultural and socioeconomic reality of their environment. The level of perception of well-being is measured from the qualified data of subjective. That consists on asking questions where the investigated has the possibility of choosing an answer among others: Very rich, a little rich, average, a little poor, and very poor.<sup>2</sup> This variable allows appreciating the felt of the households as for their standard of living. By operating a first descriptive analysis, we notice that 1 % of the households consider themselves very rich, 3.9 % consider rich and the households classified themselves in the category averagely rich, a little bit poor and very poor are respectively 41 %, 35.5 % and 18 %. Only 31 heads of household cannot themselves localized, or 0.02%. At the communities level, all areas residency confused, the feeling of poverty of communities is, the point of view of household heads, very extensive: more than half of household heads (56%) believe that their community (neighborhood) is "a little poor" or "very poor." In 2001 - 2002, three quarters of the heads of household (74.0%) had the same feeling, which shows that incidence of perceived poverty has decreased significantly in the period (ESAM 2 - 2002). In contrast, less than 6% consider their neighbourhood or village "a bit rich" or "rich." The perspective of households varies according to the residence, translating in a decline of incidence of perceived of poverty with the degree of urbanization: 51.4% of the heads of households in the cities declare their community, poor or very poor. In rural areas, however, two counts of three households (64.7%) consider their village as such. By reorganizing this information in two modalities (poor and non-poor), we notice that 55% of households are in the poor category. This suggests an underestimation of poverty by the monetary approach which is 50.8% compared to the perception of households. On the other hand, based on this same survey, the evolution of their situation of well-being has also been taken into account<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> It was codified in the investigation by the following question: "You even, to what category do you think to belong?"

<sup>3</sup> It was codified in the investigation by the following question: "Now, how do you find the general economic situation of household by

Also, 46% of households believe their economic situation has deteriorated in the space within 5 years, against 26.3% who feel that their situation remain the same and only 28% who felt that their situation improved during this period.

### **3. The determinants of subjective poverty: an econometric approach**

In this section, we analyze the determinants of poverty in Senegal based on the classification made by the population itself according to the characteristics of the households. We use an econometric model for the analysis: a probit estimation on the basis of data from ESPS - 2006. The first estimate is made on the total population. Then, as the sense of membership may vary depending on the environment (because of the subjective character), a second application is made according to the residence environment, and finally a third, according to classification of monetary poverty (relative monetary poverty threshold).

#### *3.1. The choice of variables*

The literature on the determinants of poverty identifies a number of factors often mentioned in the developing countries. Several studies have reported a number of factors considered as determinants of poverty households in African countries such as place of residence, age, sex and level of education of the household head. In this study we propose other variables in addition to the classical variables.

#### *3.1. The dependent variable*

Depending the object of study the dependent variable used is the category belonging of the household according to its own opinion. The advantage of this indicator is to have clearly identified the category belonging of membership. For the analysis, only two categories are retained: poor (very poor, poor and moderately poor) and non-poor (rich, moderately rich and very rich).

#### *3.2. The explanatory variables:*

In the study of the determinants of monetary poverty, variables such as place of residence (1), age (2), sex of household head (3) education (4) are often used in empirical studies (Ketkar, 1979; Langani 1997; Schoumaker and Tabutin, 1999). Other variables can be included (see Table 1) such as the situation of the neighborhood of residence of the household, housing, ownership of means of communication. But in analysis of determinants of perceived poverty, we propose other variables until here rarely taken into account. They include the economic situation of the household (4) compared to 5 years ago (SECO\_5) corresponding to the situation when passing ESAM2 (2002), which allows to see the evolution of his poverty according to him. Economic situation of the district of residence is obtained by two variables, the neighborhood belonging of household head (5) and situation of neighborhood of residence 5 years ago (6). The policies against poverty obtained by two variables: the policies implemented by the State perceived by the household (7) and the degree of priority of the welfare of households according household (8), the scale of corruption in the Community (9) and the taking account of the household's income represented by the log of the daily expenditure per adult equivalent.

Table 1: Definition of variables of subjective poverty

Variable	Définition
MIL	Place of residence of the household head (2 terms: urban - rural)
AGE	Age of household head
SEXE	Sex of household head (2 modalities male - female)
EDUC	The level of education of household head
PAUV_5	The household's economic situation compared to 5 years there (3 modalities : Enhanced - status quo - down)
QUARTIER	The district membership of household head (4 modalities : high - medium - low - very poor)
POLI_BE	Policies and programs of the State v / s concerns and needs of the poor (2 modalities : yes, no)
PRIOTAT	Consideration of the poor as a priority in the policies of the State (3 modalities: enough - low - not at all).
CORRUPTION	Evolution of corruption and misappropriation of public funds (3 modalities : increase - status quo - down)
DEPENSES	Household income per adult equivalent per day

Note: The data variables PAUV\_5, NEIGHBORHOOD, POLI\_BE, PRIOTAT CORRUPTION and feelings are of the household

### 3.3. Econometric approach

The dichotomous probit model admits for explained variable, not a quantitative coding associated with the occurrence of the event (as in the case of the linear specification), but the probability of occurrence of the event, conditional on the exogenous variables. Thus, we consider the following model:

$$p_i = \text{Prob}(y_i = 1 | x_i) = F(x_i \beta) \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, N \quad (1)$$

With the householder  $y_i$ ,  $x_i$  variable likely to affect poverty. For each head of household is asked:

$$Y_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if household} \in C1 \\ 0 & \text{if household} \in C2 \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

C1 is the group of poor households according to their own classification and C2 group of non-poor household according to its own classification. That is, we consider the following dichotomous model:

$$p_i = \text{Prob}(y_i = 1 | x_i) = F(x_i \beta) \quad \text{with } i = 1, \dots, N \quad (3)$$

$Y_i$  is the variable to be explained (poverty),  $x_i$  exogenous variables and  $\beta$  variable settings

$$E[y_i] = \Pr(y_i = 1) * 1 + \Pr(y_i = 0) * 0 = \Pr(y_i = 1) = p_i \quad (4)$$

Distribution function  $F(\cdot)$  is the distribution function of the standard normal distribution:

$$F(y) = \int_{-\infty}^y \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-\frac{x^2}{2}} dy = \varphi(y) \quad (5)$$

The probability associated with the event  $y_i = 1$ , is the value of the distribution function of the standard normal distribution and reduced to the point considered  $x_i \beta$ :

$$p_i = \varphi(x_i, \beta) = \int_{-\infty}^{x_i \beta} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-\frac{x^2}{2}} dy \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, N \quad (6)$$

Before turning to the estimates, it must be ascertained whether the explanatory variables of the model, in the case of data that we use are not highly correlated. This question raises the issue of a possible multicollinearity between the explanatory variables and causes in instability of estimated coefficients. To ensure that this constraint does not arise, we use the matrix of tetrachoric correlations. The examination of the matrix

of correlation coefficients between the variables provides the results in Table 2. The correlation between variables remains low.

Table 2: Matrix of correlation between the explanatory variables

	SEXE	AGE	MIL	EDUC	QUART	PAUV-5	POL_BE	CORRU	DEPENSE	PRIOTAT
SEXE	1.0000									
AGE	-0.0160	1.0000								
MIL	0.0724	0.0340	1.0000							
EDUC	0.1545	-0.1478	0.1629	1.0000						
QUART	-0.0712	0.1549	0.0286	-0.0778	1.0000					
PAUV-5	-0.0989	0.1971	-0.0063	-0.2436	0.4023	1.0000				
POL_BE	-0.1025	0.1484	-0.0343	-0.0803	0.1036	0.2045	1.0000			
CORR	-0.1558	0.1632	-0.0146	-0.0599	0.2314	0.2195	0.2175	1.0000		
DEPENSES	-0.1492	0.2191	-0.1161	-0.3866	0.2377	0.2006	0.0071	0.0135	1.0000	
PRIOTAT	-0.0672	-0.1135	-0.1561	0.1059	0.1943	-0.0952	0.0958	0.0665	-0.0127	1.0000

#### 4. The determinants of perceived level of life

Table 3 allows us to perceive the determinants of poverty in Senegal on the basis of the perception of households by the method of maximum likelihood. In the first place, in the overall, place of residence (rural), household size, age, sex (male) and the level of education of the household head is a fundamental determiner of the feeling of well-being. Indeed, the academic level of the household head grows significantly the satisfaction in terms of conditions of existence, since the probability of having more favorable living conditions increases with a high level of educational attainment. Their previous situation as well as the district of residence of the household remains a determining factor in the situation of their current well-being. By households, non-consideration of a policy of fight against poverty as a priority by the state and the advanced degree of corruption in countries are determining factors which would impact negatively on their well-being (positive significance of the parameters POLI\_BE and CORR PRIOTAT of model (1)). The consensus is massive at this level. The majority of household heads agrees on absenteeism of the policy against poverty and the non-consideration of the reduction of poverty as a priority in the actions of the state. Households consider to be abandoned by the state, especially poor households. This result questions the efforts of the Senegalese authorities since the implementation of the Strategy Document for Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (DSRP-II, 2004). Indeed, at the national level, most households (54.6%) think that the poor are not a priority for the state. This sentiment seems to have increased since 2001-2002 when the proportion was estimated at 38.6%. Thus, nearly 38% only consider that the poor are effectively one of the first concerns of the state. Their unfavorable standard of living remains widely attributable also at their level of income (weak) and at their previous situation. In the second place, an estimation separated from the households according to the geographical localization gives rather contrasted results. It is in the cities where the age and the men head household, are much more significant in the probability of being poor. The major part of the women heads of the household in town are emancipated with a high educational level. This would demonstrate the "empowerment" and the growing empowerment of women (Pilon et al, 1997). Women heads of households in temporary absence of their husbands are much more present in rural areas because of polygamy and the rural exodus<sup>4</sup>. Unlike in the city where the household heads women permanent are more representative<sup>5</sup>. Also, in

<sup>4</sup> The operational definition of household members means co-residents, and excludes the persons physically absent at the time of the census, even if they help to support the household. Yet there is no prohibit to think that a migrant husband continues to take major decisions or to take care of the household economy (Pilon et al, 1997).



rural areas, households headed by an elderly person are often large where agriculture is the main activity that requires a labor-intensive, and where well-being boils to obtaining modest resources, contrary to the town. The female heads of households, are little represented (non-significant of the parameter of the SEX variable). This situation is attributable in the impregnation of the religion, the culture and, more or less, at the almost non-existent education which still maintain the women in a certain submission. When we request the population to assess the relevance of the policies implemented in terms of struggle against poverty and the priorities of the State, the notices are also shared in town and in countryside. Rural households are relatively more likely to think that the poor are not a priority for the state (nearly 57.9%) or that priority, if it exists, is not well displayed to enable them to give their opinions (8.1% undecided) and that this constitutes an obstacle to improving their well-being. In urban areas, 51.6% of household heads emit this feeling. Regarding the effectiveness of policies to fight against poverty, they are only 30% to be truly convinced of the effectiveness of policies. Poorest - supposed to be the main beneficiaries of policies - doubt as much as the rest of the population on the results of implemented policies. According to them, the ineffectiveness of policies constitutes a key determinant of their welfare situations. Paradoxically, this feeling is felt in cities (negative significances of parameters and variables POLIBIENE PRIOETA for urban areas). This, through access to information in urban areas. Corruption is a factor widely underlined and felt by the population as a major impediment to welfare, and whatever the residence place. A review of past and current efforts to fight poverty suggests that corruption constitutes a permanent obstacle for the countries which try to reform their political, economic and social system to develop. In Senegal, after the independences, the Senegalese administration is gradually passed into the hands of natives. Loyalty, the rules of the Republican orthodoxy, moral probity inherited from the colonial administration, collapses to make way to nepotism and the mismanagement, two realities that are the result of political patronage<sup>6</sup>. This feeling is obvious regardless of geographic localization. The majority of households (50.4%) believe that corruption has not decreased and slowed efforts policies of well-being. With less than three in ten households only which assert that corruption and misappropriation of public funds are reduced. One might think that the state did not succeed yet at a significant reduction and visible corruption. It is probably what explains the not insignificant demand for "more transparency". According to the ESPS, households remain fixed on the idea according to which corruption weakened the state initiatives on strategies against poverty. Thirdly, an estimate of welfare by gender revealed a significant difference on the perception of policies against poverty. The policies implemented by the State are a factor determiner on the evolution of the well-being of the women heads of the household. Indeed, it is now widely accepted that women are the most affected by the economic crisis that cross the south's countries these recent decades. It is in this frame that reflections, approaches and actions to improve their conditions have been a priority in the strategic document for poverty reduction. This process of integration of women in development is expressed in Senegal in terms of "well-being", "equality", "anti-poverty", "efficiency" or of «power's strengthening". The contribution of these heuristic approaches is evident not only in the actions of women's associations and women's groups, but they also influence the financing conditions of financiers (Gueye, 2006). Men, heads of household feel less concerned by policies to improve their living conditions. Fourthly, a separate estimate of households according to the criteria of monetary poverty also gives results contrasted. Their level of satisfaction with their well-being evolves positively with age. Contrary to the results of the determinants of monetary poverty (Daffé and Diagne, 2008), the elderly seem more resigned to their fate. Their sense of well-being is positively correlated with the level of education

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<sup>5</sup> It is about women who really support the load of the household, without declaring itself officially head of the household. It can be an active single young woman who assures the main revenue stream of a household, consisting of older male members, his father for example, woman separate, still married or autonomous widow.

<sup>6</sup> Senegal remains a country considered as corrupted and occupies the 90th's place on 190 countries the most corrupt in front of the Gabon, Mali Burkina Faso, on the Note of the CPI, 2008.

and negatively correlated with district of membership and the presence of corruption. Household income is positively correlated to the well-being of non-poor households and negatively in the group of poor households. The efforts of the State remain better perceived as a lever of the well-being in the "non-poor" households. The absence of effective policies of struggle against poverty remains a major obstacle for the poor people to develop positively their standard of living. This, regardless the group of membership.

Table 3: Estimate the model by maximum likelihood

		Coef. (Z stat)						
		(1)	(2)	(3)		(4)		
		N	Mil=1	Mil=0	Sexe = 1	Sexe = 0	Pauv=1	Pauv=0
Mil		-0,05438	-----	-----	-0.02856	-0.13855	-0.38466	0.47861
		(-8.30)***	-----	-----	(-11.14)***	(13.95)***	(-6.34)***	(-7.81)***
Age		0.06827	0.01820	-0.00339	0.72542	0.14285	-0.0492	-0.00623
		(-8.63)***	(-19.10)***	(-0.12)***	(6.30)*	(-3.17)*	(-2.24)**	(-0.17)**
Sexe		0.181811	0.0048	-0.13962	-----	-----	0.17222	0.41307
		(18.32)**	(-1,58)	(-1.09)***	-----	-----	(3.79)	(9.40)
EDUC		0.01544	0.03104	-0.00133	-0.07558	-0.08167	-0.05195	-0.03223
		(23.55)***	(3.12)**	(-0.02)***	(-11.90)***	(-7.86)***	(-16.06)***	(-10.22)***
PAUV -5		-0.03455	0.02233	0.599651	0.12138	0.34658	0.10933	0.04293
		(-10.14)***	(-1.93)***	(-11.49)***	(1.80)***	(15.23)***	(5.89)***	(3.02)***
QUARTIER		0.08736	0.08742	0.15963	-0.29645	0.12518	0.15463	0.41881
		(13.60)***	(8.05)***	(4.70)***	(-4.87)***	(10.41)***	(4.92)***	(15.13)***
POLI_BE		-0.03519	-0.04056	-0.12827	0.08969	-0.14788	-0.00521	0.12561
		(-3.62)***	(-1.38)*	(-3.48)***	(1.65)**	(-4.36)***	(-0.72)*	(-8.48)***
PRIOTAT		0.01476	0.01282	-0.07635	-0.11503	-0.03907	0.67214	0.58138
		(-2.20)***	(-1.53)*	(-6.11)***	(-2.35)**	(-1.68)***	(20.42)***	(-20.25)***
CORRUPTION		0.06390	0.2953	0.153954	0.53218	0.183757	-0.20614	0.40143
		(8.05)***	(11.81)***	(2.84)***	(9.26)***	(7.33)***	(-5.46)***	(12.25)***
DEPENSE		-0.11182	0.50022	-0.11617	-0.51833	-0.4380	-0.14559	-1.0079
		(-14.55)***	(-22.08)***	(-1.60)***	(-9.36)***	(-18.48)***	(-11.28)***	(-2.44)*
Constante		0.9957	2.33338	-2.14733	4.95560	1.78313	-4.81546	11.9402
		(16.40)***	(12.77)***	(-3.48)***	(10.52)***	(9.30)***	(-12.52)***	(27.90)***
N obs.		13584	4992	8607	10528	3056	6176	7408
Log likelihood		-8788.99	-632.51	-7887.10	-6698.29	-1695.27	-3611.12	-3530.27

The dependent variable is the classification made by the heads of households themselves with 1 = poor and 0 = not poor. The numbers in parentheses are z-statistics. \*\*\* Significant at 1%. \*\* Significant at 5%. \* Significant at 10%. (1) on the entire population. (2) according to the location with 1 and 0 = rural areas. (3) along with Type 1 = male and 0 = female. (4) estimation according to the classification of poverty with poor and non-poor = 1 = 0

Source: Author's calculations based on data from ESPS 2005/2006.

The implications of these observations in terms of consistency and of targeting, geographic and social policies to reduce poverty are worthy of interest. This being, the reduction of monetary poverty, said objective would not entail inevitably an improvement of the well-being (Doudich, on 2009). In this same perspective, these perceptions and opinions are important to meet the needs of the poorest people and to maximize the effectiveness of the implementation of various programs of fight against poverty (Mbaye, 2010). The perception that populations have of the well-being, the poverty, of its demonstrations and its explanatory factors command to a large extent their behavior and their reactions with regard to the public policies (DSRP,



on 2002). It thus turns out to be necessary to integrate this perception, in order to explore the opinions of the society in general and the poor in particular on the notions of well-being and poverty. All this pleads in favor of the consideration of a subjective approach as a supplement to classic approaches, on one hand, because it does not necessarily appear more random than the objective approaches, and secondly, because it allows to take into account criteria that are not easily measurable and therefore hidden in the objective approaches. The question that deserves an attention is: what are the levers on which, according to population, the authorities should support to improve their well-being?

## 5. The priority areas for improving the sense of well-being

In view of the survey data, three levers are primarily evoked by householders which the State should focus its efforts to improve their living conditions<sup>7</sup>. The first emitted priority at first "more equity and social justice" (43% of households). What is not the main objective of the strategy of poverty reduction of the DSRP II - 2002 which focuses on accelerating economic growth, and reducing monetary poverty populations below 30 percent within 2015. Then "a more active participation of the population in state decisions" (33.8%) is emitted. And finally "greater transparency" (21%) is the third priority emitted by Senegalese households. However, rural areas which suffer the most disparities so observed through practically all the indicators of standard of living, are relatively more numerous to ask for " more social justice " (45.9% against 39.6% in urban zones), while city-dwellers more warned on the questions relative to good governance are more inclined to worry about " more transparency " with 25 % against 17.6 % in rural areas, (ESPS - 2006, final report). With respect to sectors where the state should intervene, youth employment has received more voice (34.4%), followed education (18.9%), reduction of consumer prices (14.5%) and health (12.5%). Whereas the youth employment remains a major concern of city-dwellers (44.5 % against 25.7 % in the rural households), the health worries more the rural (15.3 % against 7.1 % in the cities). Food self-sufficiency (5.6%), access to credit (4.1%), the development of transport infrastructure (3.6%), the increase of prices to the producers (3.4%) and the safety of persons and property (1.7%) are almost relegated, from the point of view of populations at a secondary level of priority.

## 6. Conclusion

In this study, we have addressed poverty as perceived by households themselves through an econometric analysis. The object was to show other factors on which the heads of the household themselves based for appreciate their level of well-being. The previous studies in this domain confirmed that even in poor countries the monetary dimension appears first of all to explain the level of subjective well-being (Narayan and al 2000). This seems to be relevant as far as one of the major objectives of research for income is the satisfaction, at first, nutritional needs (Mbaye, on 2010). The results of our regressions show that the subjective well-being is heavily dependent on food problems represented in our study by the income (or expenditure) households. In other words, the more the food problems persist in the household, the more they feel poor. The analysis of the felt poverty highlights other difficulties in particular not economic dimensions of the poverty (exclusion, social inequality, cultural, political and social-justice) which strengthens this feeling of poverty. The global appreciation of the population on their feeling of poverty is rather dramatic. Those who feel fully happy with their situation are only a small minority. The separate estimates of households according to the criteria collected emphasize differences relating to their concerns. The differences are spotted, as well according to the geographical localization, the gender and according to the standard of living.

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<sup>7</sup> More details on the final report of the ESPS - 2006.

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